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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SOURCE

1. The name of the peat factory in Liepaja was "Plotse Peat Factory". It was located 22 kilometers northeast of Liepaja at the 750 mm gauge railroad station of Plotse (57 01 N, 21 08 E). The factory obtained its raw material from the 200 hectare Vergale bog. The bog was drained with open ditches and its bottom was approximately 6 meters above sea level. It was approximately 4 kilometers from the sea. A narrow-gauge railroad, built on iron ties, was constructed across the bog and was about 30 kilometers in length. Dump cars, drawn by small Diesel locomotives, carried the cut peat to the factory site. 50X1

2. The factory consisted of three sections; the litter peat, insulation plates, and fuel peat sections. The main output of the factory was litter peat, used by agricultural and horticultural facilities as a fertilizer and also used for packing fruit and vegetables. Approximately 25% of the produced litter peat was exported through the Swedish Peat Trust to Holland, France, and the US. The section for producing litter peat was housed in a wooden building that had a floor area of approximately 20 x 50 meters. Peat was ground, screened, dried, and then pressed into 1 x .60 x .50 meter blocks, each weighing about 60 kilograms. They were produced on a conveyor line system. The top layer of mossy peat was used. After it had been cut by hand shovels from a drained bog, it was dried by the sun and wind. Prior to the Soviet occupation, approximately 100,000 blocks were produced each year. The capacity of the factory, working three shifts, was 250,000 blocks per year.

3. The peat insulation plates were used for construction purposes, refrigerator insulating and for insulating concrete ceilings and floors. The plates produced were of the fireproof, moisture-proof, and termite-proof type. The majority of the termite-proof type plates were exported to India. This section was housed in a brick building and a brick warehouse. A stationary high-pressure steam boiler with a heating surface of 5,000 square feet was used. The steam-heated drying chambers had a temperature of plus 200 degree centigrade. The insulation plate shop

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also had hydraulic presses. Its annual output was approximately 40,000 square meters of plates of various thicknesses. The capacity of the plate shop was 100,000 square meters a year. Raw material to produce insulation plates was the top layer of the extracted peat with a proper chemical admixture.

4. The fuel peat section used only the lower layers of peat. It was extracted by electric power driven excavators. Fuel peat was produced mainly for use in factory's insulation plate shop.

5. The enterprise had all the necessary buildings such as warehouses, repair shops, and office buildings. These were constructed of brick. Three buildings for seasonal workers, as well as a store, were built of wood. The management personnel were housed in a three-story brick apartment building. Some of the workers lived in their own homes located near the factory.

6. The entire plant employed approximately 800 workers and operated on two shifts. All of the machinery used was of German origin.

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